

Education Development Center/Time to Learn Project
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A/COP	Acting Chief of Party
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
COP	Chief of Party
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
ECZ	Examinations Council of Zambia
EDC	Education Development Center
FAWEZA	Forum for African Women Educationalists in Zambia
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FY	Financial Year
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NISTCOL	National In-service Teacher's College
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
POC	Provincial Outreach Coordinator
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PRP	Primary Reading Program
TTL	Time to Learn
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VVOB	Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance
VSU	Victim Support Unit
WASH	School Water and Sanitation and Hygiene Education Project
ZOCS	Zambia Open Community Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Time to Learn (TTL) Project is to assist the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) through a five-year national program to provide an equitable standard of education service for vulnerable learners, improve reading skills, and implement practical strategies to strengthen school quality and promote community engagement in community schools. The key purpose of the project is to institutionalize, in a decentralized way, MESVTEE support to community schools to stabilize their operations by providing educational resources, improving teacher skills and school management, improving learner performance, and enhancing learner support through community and private sector participation.

TTL is currently focusing on activities that are preliminary to project implementation in the next fiscal year. During this quarter, provincial outreach officers were engaged to assist with the disbursement of scholarships to ensure vulnerable learners were able to transition from lower level education in community schools to higher level classes in upper basic and secondary schools. Camfed and FAWEZA have been actively disbursing scholarships and will meet their targets by the end of the fiscal year.

During the quarter, site visits to three provinces (Central, Lusaka, and Southern) were conducted to obtain a first-hand impression of community schools in terms of teacher and learner performance, materials and infrastructure availability, and community support. MESVTEE district level personnel accompanied the TTL team to all sites. The impressions gained indicate that community schools are in immediate need of assistance. Most teachers are untrained, materials are lacking, and learners are failing to perform, particularly to read to a satisfactory level. However, in some schools, remnants of MESVTEE reading programs such as PRP remain and can be built upon to improve reading skills.

Based on the field observations and direction from the USAID Education Team Leader and TTL COR, TTL began working on a revised draft work plan, PMP, program description, and budget in order to incorporate field observations and align the program with USAID/Washington Education Goal 1. The primary focus of this work has been to provide detailed plans in how the TTL project will improve the teaching of reading in community schools and to train teachers how to achieve this aim.

Finally, TTL helped plan and participated in a USAID Education Sector Project Launch on 28th June. All five programs in the education sector (i.e., Time to Learn, Step-up, Read to Succeed, Splash, and WASH) were officially launched at a ceremony officiated by the Minister of Education Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) Dr. John Phiri. In his speech, he commended USAID on the support provided to the education sector. The USAID Zambia Mission Director, Dr. Susan Brems also gave a speech in which she said the USAID-funded projects will help to improve reading skills as they will enable the MESVTEE to strengthen education management and information systems, support community schools, counsel learners, train teachers and improve school water and sanitation facilities. Others in attendance were senior MESVTEE officials, bilateral and cooperating partners who support education programs in Zambia, Camfed, FAWEZA, and the NISTCOL staff.

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Time to Learn (TTL) project is USAID/Zambia's flagship program of support for improved educational outcomes among orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) enrolled in community schools. TTL will partner with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, Vocational Training, and Early Education (MESVTEE), to develop an effective, replicable and sustainable model for reinforcing reading success and responding to the economic, social and psychological complexities faced by OVC. This includes providing scholarships to assist OVC to transition from community to government schools.

TTL's key purpose is to sustainably improve the quality of education in community schools and institutionalize, in a decentralized way, MESVTEE support to community schools to stabilize their operations. This will be done by providing educational resources, improving teacher skills and school management, and enhancing learner support through community and private sector participation.

Addressing four key task areas, TTL will assist the MESVTEE to:

- Promote a favorable environment for MESVTEE engagement at all levels to support community schools.
- Promote HIV/AIDS prevention and provide a continuum of educational and financial support to enable OVC to participate in upper basic and secondary education;
- Develop the capacity of local community groups and NGOs to advocate for opportunities for children in greatest need; and
- Support opportunities to engage universities and other institutions in research related to promoting educational opportunities for OVC.

II. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

A. Technical

TTL has completed several technical and administrative tasks and achievements in the quarter including:

- Consultative meetings with MESVTEE about the TTL program
- Site visits to 16 schools (3 GRZ and 13 community) in Lusaka, Central, and Southern Provinces to collect information on the teaching of reading, challenges, and potential opportunities for improving the learning and teaching environment for learners and teachers.
- Participation in MESVTEE activities such as the Joint Annual Review Meeting, planning meeting for the training of untrained teachers in community schools, and School, Health and Nutrition month.
- Disbursement of 7,866 scholarships to OVC (4,824 to females and 3,042 to males) throughout Zambia
- Consultative meeting with the Victim Support Unit of the Police Services, Ministry of Home Affairs
- Meeting with key partners such as UNICEF, Irish Aid, and VVOB
- Participation in Embassy of Japan Teacher Training Meeting
- Short-term technical assistance by EDC Reading Expert and EnCompass Senior Research and Evaluation Advisor
- Meetings with University of Zambia and Zambia Open University (Directorates of Research and Graduate Studies)
- Presentation about TTL's activities to the Donors Coordinating Group for the Education Sector
- Helped to organize and participated in the USAID Education Sector Program Launch

B. Administrative

TTL has completed several administrative tasks and achievements in the quarter including:

- Personnel recruited: Chief of Party, 6 Provincial Outreach Coordinators, Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant, Accountant, Receptionist, and Office Orderly/Caretaker
- Finance and administrative officers were successfully trained in EDC financial systems
- Secured and moved into office space at 10 Nkanchibaya Road, Rhodespark, Lusaka
- Procured office equipment and furniture
- Meetings with MESVTEE for office space to accommodate the TTL COP and technical personnel

III. SUMMARY OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A. Technical

1. **Consultative meetings with MESVTEE:** The TTL technical team had consultative meetings with several officers in the MESVTEE to introduce them to the project to discuss collaboration. Names of the officers consulted are included in Appendix 4.

At the central level, TTL consulted MESVTEE officers to collect information about the number and site of community schools in Zambia; the *Operational Guidelines for Community Schools*; and testing and assessment procedures for community schools. At the district level, DEBs were consulted during site visits (see item 2 below) and requested to allow district officers to accompany the TTL team on visits to community schools in the district.

2. **Site visits:** Site visits were conducted in 13 community schools and 3 basic schools in Lusaka, Central and Southern Provinces to collect information about their existing situation, challenges, and potential opportunities for improving the learning and teaching environment for pupils and teachers. (See Appendix 2 for report). The team visiting the schools consisted of TTL's specialists, two specialists from ECZ, TTL Provincial Outreach Coordinators, and officers from District Education Board Secretary's offices. Some of the MESVTEE staff that accompanied the team was able to visit some of the community schools for the first time due to availability of transportation provided by TTL. The USAID COR, Beatrice Mweene, and the Reading Specialist, Rebecca Rhodes joined the team on the trip to Southern Province.

General observations: Most teachers the team visited were untrained, not able to plan their lessons and did not know how to teach reading; teaching and learning materials were not available in the majority of community schools; many of the teachers in community schools were not maintaining records on learner performance and there was no homework policy; and incentives (including access to a regular salary) for retaining teachers were absent.

3. **Participation in MESVTEE activities:** The Acting Chief of Party (A/COP) participated in the Joint Annual Review Meeting on "Understanding the Quality for Improved Learner Performance." Presentations were given on the issues, challenges, and opportunities facing schools at various levels in the education sector (e.g. basic/primary, secondary and tertiary). The meeting also looked at the National Assessment Report and considered the low level of performance of learners throughout the country. On the last day of the meeting, civil society organizations conducted a panel discussion on the activities in the sector, such as support to community schools, gender equity and eradication of gender-based violence in school settings, and HIV and AIDS/reproductive health.

The Acting Chief of Party also participated in a one-day meeting for MESVTEE and civil society organizations on the training of teachers in community schools. The meeting was organized by VVOB, who are also helping the Ministry to develop a policy framework for community schools. An outcome of the meeting was the recommendation that untrained community school teachers teaching grades 1-7 with minimum entry qualifications should

receive the same training and certification given to primary school teachers in government schools.

The Acting Chief of Party and Community Mobilization Specialist participated in the planning committee for School, Health and Nutrition month. TTL contributed to the theme for 2012 which is “stay healthy, learn and grow.”

4. **Scholarship Disbursements.** TTL has been working closely with partners Camfed and FAWEZA to ensure that 16,000 scholarships are disbursed by the end of this fiscal year. Camfed and FAWEZA report that 7,866 scholarships have been disbursed (4,824 to females and 3,042 to males). The remaining will be disbursed in early September when schools re-open for the last term. Both groups are providing 60% of the scholarships to girls and 40% to boys who are in upper basic or in secondary school.

FAWEZA has the largest number of scholarships to disburse within a relatively short period of time this FY (12,958), therefore the Performance Monitoring Specialist has been working closely with them to improve their M & E system to accommodate the numbers. The Monitoring and Evaluation Fellow, Mr. Robert Pollard, developed a template for both organizations to monitor scholarship disbursement and report on who receives scholarships (gender, age, and geographical location) by school, scholarship monies disbursed, and impact on the learning performance of the recipient.

5. **Consultative meeting with the Victim Support Unit (VSU) of the Police Services, Ministry of Home Affairs.** The Acting Chief of Party and Community Mobilization Specialist met with the coordinator of the Victim Support Unit (Mr. Tresphore Kasale) to see how they might assist in mitigating gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual abuse in community schools. Mr. Kasale said the VSU is ready and quite enthusiastic in working with TTL on these issues. He proposed that the Unit particularly works with young boys to inculcate a culture of mutual respect and non-tolerance of GBV.
6. **Meetings UNICEF, Irish Aid, and VVOB:** Several bilateral and multilateral organizations are supporting community schools in Zambia with technical assistance, funding, or a combination of both. Following attendance to a meeting of the community school sub-committee of Civil Society Organizations in the Education Sector group, TTL began identifying donors and cooperating partners in the sector with a view to establishing collaborative linkages.

Separate meetings were held with UNICEF and Irish Aid, who co-chair the Community School sub-committee and VVOB, who advise the Ministry about community school policy and programming issues. During the meeting with Munazunga Siakalu, Education Specialist at UNICEF, it was agreed that a mapping exercise would be useful to identify sources of financial, material and other support for community schools in Zambia. It was suggested that TTL lead in this task. UNICEF is supporting all community schools in 16 districts in Luapula, Northern, Muchinga, Eastern and Western Provinces. UNICEF's partners are Zambia Open Community Schools, Camfed, and FAWEZA. UNICEF feels that some of the

main challenges for MESVTEE in working with community schools are how to help them to maintain an identity and community involvement in education delivery.

Irish Aid is the chair of the Community School Sub-committee and supports community schools in Northern Province. The meeting at Irish Aid was attended by the A/COP, two technical staff and the Reading Specialist from EDC on 28th June 2012. The main objective was to ascertain Irish Aid's work in the area of education. Until recently Irish Aid has been working with local councils in Northern province in 4 districts namely, Mpika, Mbala, Luwingu, Kasama. However, there are plans to widen their work in the four districts and move to two districts to be identified.

Irish Aid was also supporting a Teacher Education Exchange program between 2 colleges in Ireland and two Teacher Training Colleges (Charles Lwangwa and Copperbelt Secondary Teachers' College in Southern and Copperbelt provinces respectively). However, this exchange program came to an end in April 2012.

TTL met with two VVOB staff members, Leonie Meijerink, Program Advisor – Distance Education and Lyson Chikunduzi, Program Advisor – Community Schools, to discuss their support to MESVTEE and community schools. VVOB is embedded in the Ministry and is supporting them to develop a framework for integration of community schools into the Ministry's planning, programming and budgeting systems. VVOB also partners with ZOCs to facilitate access by community schools to teacher training programs, materials, and equipment provided by MESVTEE. TTL provided an overview of its planned activities with the MESVTEE and other partners. At the end of the meeting VVOB and TTL agreed to remain in touch to exchange information and collaborate in the future as opportunities arose.

7. **Participation in the Training Meeting at the Embassy of Japan:** The Performance Monitoring Specialist and Reading Specialist participated in a meeting on teacher training, organized by the Embassy of Japan. The Embassy of Japan is assisting MESVTEE to train secondary school teachers in reflective methodologies. Although most community schools presently end at lower and middle basic level, there are a few that have upper basic and secondary school classes. The purpose of TTL's participation in the meeting was to become familiar with as many donor-supported interventions targeting teacher training and continuous professional development as possible.
8. **Technical support by EDC Reading Expert and EnCompass Senior Monitoring and Research Specialist:** Rebecca Rhodes, EDC's reading expert, spent three weeks with TTL to assess existing capacity of community schools to teach reading, strengthen the work plan so that acquisition of reading skills and how they can be improved in community schools are clearly articulated, and hold discussions with MESVTEE and Read to Succeed on how to improve acquisition of reading skills in lower levels of education.

Diane Gardsbane, Senior Research and Evaluation Advisor with EnCompass (EDC's partner) traveled to Zambia twice to undertake preliminary activities leading to the baseline assessment. During her first trip in April, she assisted the Performance Monitoring Specialist to develop the first draft of the Performance Monitoring Plan, contributed to the first draft

annual workplan and five-year plan, assisted with conducting a focused group discussion at a community school in Lusaka to identify salient issues affecting the school, and began recruitment for the Research Fellow for TTL.

During her second trip, which was only for a few days, she began to lay groundwork for a consultative meeting with stakeholders to the baseline assessment.

- 9. Meetings with University of Zambia and Zambia Open University:** The Performance Monitoring Specialist and Senior Research and Evaluation Specialist from EnCompass met with Dr. Peter Manchishi, Assistant Director of Research and Graduate Studies at the University of Zambia, School of Education and Dr. John Milimo, Director of Research and Graduate Studies at Zambia Open University. The meeting was to discuss the baseline assessment and modalities for the recruitment of students to serve as research interns. About 75 applied to be interns for the baseline assessment.
- 10. Presentation to the Donors Coordinating Group for the Education Sector:** The Acting Chief of Party (A/COP) made a presentation to the cooperating partners in the Education Sector in June. The presentation provided an overview of the project including the emphasis on improving reading skills, potential sites for program implementation, and supplemental services provided to learners to mitigate against economic and socio-cultural factors that impede academic progress.
- 11. USAID Education Sector Program Launch:** All five programs in the education sector (i.e., Time to Learn, Step-up, Read to Succeed, Splash, and WASH) were officially launched at a ceremony on 28th June at the National In-service Teacher's College (NISTCOL). The Minister of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education Dr. John Phiri officiated at the launch. He acknowledged the projects and their Chiefs of Party. He commended USAID on the support provided to the education sector. Dr. Susan Brems, the USAID Zambia Mission Director, also gave a speech in which she said the USAID-funded projects will help to improve reading skills as they will enable the MESTVTEE to strengthen education management and information systems, support community schools, counsel learners, train teachers and improve school water and sanitation facilities.

Others in attendance were senior MESVTEE officials, bilateral and cooperating partners who support education programs in Zambia, Camfed, FAWWEZA, and the NISTCOL staff. Pupils at the local primary school provided entertainment, which included songs, poetry recital, and a play.

All of the projects were given space to advertise their program through posters, pull-up banners, and hand-out materials. The TTL table was popular with most of the materials taken by the public. Paul Machona, the Performance Monitoring Specialist, was TTL's focal point person for preparation of the launch. TTL supported catering of the event, supply of cleaning materials for NISTCOL, and provision of place cards for attendees.

B. Administrative

1. **Personnel recruited:** During the quarter the previously identified Chief of Party declined the position, however an alternative was identified. Four provincial outreach coordinators were engaged and assisted FAWEZA to disburse scholarships by participating in meetings with the school-based selection committees. In some cases the POCs were involved in training selection committee members on the process and criteria for selection of scholarship recipients. The POCs were also involved in leading teams during the site visits and reporting on the situation of the community schools visited.
2. **Training of finance and administrative officers:** In May the Finance and Administrative Manager and Office Manager were successfully trained in EDC and USAID financial managements systems and compliance requirements by **Christopher Ngovi**, EDC Finance and Compliance Manager. Financial and management systems in TTL have been put into place to align with EDC and USAID requirements.
3. **Office Accommodation:** In May, TTL moved into offices at 10 Nkanchibaya Road, Rhodespark, Lusaka. The offices are situated in a quiet residential neighborhood and are compliant with the security requirements of USAID. However, as detailed in the next section below, there have been problems with the landlord.
4. **Equipment and Office Furniture Procured:** Most of the office equipment and furniture have been procured, almost all for the TTL office in Lusaka. Furniture for MESVTEE headquarters (where the COP, Performance Monitoring Specialist, and OVC Specialist will be situated), and district education offices (where the POCs will be situated) will be procured in the fourth quarter.
5. **Office Space in MESVTEE:** The Acting Chief of Party has been seeking suitable office space in MESVTEE headquarters.

IV. CHALLENGES AND PLANNED RESPONSE

A. Technical

1. **Realignment of TTL project with USAID Education Strategy:**

Challenge: TTL has been working in this quarter to revise its technical approach to focus more on reading instruction in community schools, as per instructions given to us by the Education Team Leader, TTL COR, and the Contracts Officer. Re-aligning the project to focus on improvement in reading, while also adequately taking into consideration the complexities of issues confronting the vulnerable learner, is a challenge. USAID Zambia asked the project to go out and review the situation before completing the work plan so as to avoid preconceived notions about community schools in Zambia. The exercise was very fruitful and provided insights to challenges in community schools such as untrained teachers, inadequate to non-availability of learning materials and teaching guides, and the existence of psychosocial problems that impede learning on the part of pupils. This information contributed to the re-submission of the AWP and PMP to be done in early July.

Planned response: Work is underway to re-program the project in terms of the technical feedback provided by USAID Zambia.

2. **Meetings with MESVTEE:**

Challenge: All five USAID-funded projects in the education sector are expected to work closely with MESVTEE at national and decentralized levels. This puts a burden on MESVTEE officers who have to respond to 5 different requests for guidance and assistance on a regular basis, and have proved to be challenging in obtaining the level of cooperation desired by the project.

Physically placing key TTL staff in the MESVTEE will facilitate constant access to decision-makers, opportunities to participate in critical meetings, and dialogue about actions that are required to fully integrate community schools into MESVTEE operations. Securing adequate office space for the TTL personnel that are to be embedded into the Ministry has also been challenging.

Planned response: TTL is meeting with the Director of Standards and Curriculum and Director of Distance Education to identify suitable office space to accommodate the TTL COP and technical personnel. A few offices have been identified as potential spaces at the Curriculum Development Center. However, a final decision will be made in August.

TTL is working with Read to Succeed and Step-up to organize a meeting of MESVTEE Directors to discuss possible coordination and collaboration mechanisms. TTL is also carrying out joint activities with Read to Succeed to eliminate needless duplication and achieve cost-efficiency on common activities. For instance, both projects will contribute to EGRA training and assessments based on the language groupings in which they have chosen to work. TTL will contribute 2/6 of the costs because of initially working in Chinyanja and Chitonga. MESVTEE will only be called upon once to participate in the EGRA adaptation exercise by the USAID-funded projects.

3. Recruitment of professional staff:

Challenge: Offers of employment were given to COP and OVC candidates but at the last minute they declined the position for various reasons. The first candidate for COP declined for personal reasons and the candidate for OVC Specialist was unable to accept the salary and benefits package. Fortunately, the second candidate for COP accepted the offer and will report to work on 6th August 2012.

Recruitment of the key personnel position of Teacher Development Specialist has been delayed because EDC has not found a candidate with the high quality level of skills required for this program. The Teacher Development Specialist should have knowledge and skills in how to teach reading based on the most recent pedagogy information. Thus far, candidates applying for the position are lacking the correct knowledge/skills set.

Planned response: The Chief of Party, Patrick Fayaud, will take up the position on 6th August. The following positions will be filled next fiscal quarter: Teacher Development Specialist, OVC Specialist, and Communications Specialist.

1. Disbursement of scholarships:

Challenge: Camfed and FAWEZA were given a very short period of time to disburse 16,000 scholarships. FAWEZA's monitoring and evaluation system was particularly overwhelmed because of having to track disbursement of nearly 13,000 scholarships within a 6-month period. TTL provided assistance to FAWEZA in the disbursement process and establishing an M&E system capable of capturing data required to meet minimum standards of reporting to USAID.

Planned response: All scholarships will be disbursed by the end of the fiscal year, and tracked for gender of recipient, age, geographical locality, and recipient's academic performance after receiving scholarship.

B. Administrative

1. Office accommodation:

Challenge: TTL has experienced unpleasant exchanges with the landlord of 10 Nkanchibaya Road. The landlord has not fulfilled many items listed in the contract such

as fully securing the building with burglar bars and providing a spare pump. The project has experienced days of intermittent water supply and had to be closed for a half day due to lack of water for hygiene and sanitation purposes. The landlord continuously violates the tenant agreement by storing vehicles at the back of the property, engaging workers to maintain the garden without prior permission and notification of the tenant (particularly identifying who is coming into the property), and visiting the premises after hours for unknown purposes.

Planned response: Due to the escalating tension between the project and landlord, and his lack of willingness to adhere to the terms of the lease and other agreements, TTL will move to new accommodation.

V. PLANS FOR THE FOLLOWING QUARTER

1. **Conduct mapping exercise:** A mapping exercise will be conducted to ascertain various levels of information, including areas of donor/cooperating partners support (both geographical and technical areas); geographical location of all registered community schools, local language(s) spoken in the areas where they operate; and number of trained and untrained teachers in community schools, their gender and actual qualifications. A mapping exercise will also be undertaken to identify community school teachers' attitudes and beliefs about the teaching of reading, and community members' attitudes and beliefs about reading.
2. **Adapt EGRA and e-EGRA for Zambian use:** In conjunction with Read to Succeed, TTL will adapt EGRA and translate into 6 languages (Chinyanja and Chitonga will be done by TTL and Kiikaonde, Luvale, Lunda, and Silozi will be done by Read to Succeed). This work will begin in August, through an EGRA modification workshop with participants from Read to Succeed, TTL, and MESVTEE. A team of 4 will work on each language grouping: 2 linguists will undertake the translation and 2 teachers will ensure the reading context is correct. The size of the teams reflects the complexity of each language. Although there are 7 official languages in Zambia and a general attribution of language use per geographical region, local variations exist, hence the need to reach consensus on how language will be conveyed in official academic literature. Adaptation into e-EGRA will be carried out by Simon Richmond of EDC for Time to Learn. Simon will work with the TTL team to adapt the instruments developed during the EGRA workshop and go on to train data collectors on the tool for baseline data collection
3. **Conduct baseline assessment:** Planning for the baseline will continue in July and August, and training for the baseline study will be conducted in September and October. The baseline is planned for September and October.
4. **Conduct orientation of Provincial and District Education Officers to TTL:** Although there have been some interactions between provincial and district education officers and some of the TTL personnel (primarily in terms of site visits and focused group discussions), there has not been a formal introduction of the project at decentralized

levels. This will be done to facilitate easy communication and interactions with MESVTEE district and provincial levels.

5. **Develop the process for teaching training, mentoring and supervision:** In readiness for program implementation in January 2013, TTL will carry out a number of activities with MESVTEE to define desired reading standards in the classroom for grades 1 through 4; develop a teacher observation tool specifically for reading; develop a foundational module for training in how to teach reading; and develop a scope and sequence for materials to be used during the first year in teacher learning circles.
6. **Develop Child Safety Kits** and conduct sensitization meetings with traditional, religious and other community leaders on the concept of school as havens of safety.
7. **Establish a testing and assessment working group** with ECZ to track student assessment outcomes.
8. **Participate in Literacy Day** in September, and distribute books to community schools currently not receiving assistance from any other organization. TTL will organize student reading sessions and provide a book donation to the participating schools. The books will form the kernel of school libraries.
9. **Procure remaining furniture and equipment** particularly for officers who will sit in MESVTEE offices, i.e. the Chief of Party, OVC Specialist, Performance Monitoring Specialist.

VI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Success Story: Saved From a Difficult Family Situation



Dorcas Chamuzuma

Dorcas Chamuzuma had a long walk to her grade 12 classroom, and she was beset by many problems on the way. At a time when she became qualified to undertake high school in early 2010, both her parents had been dead for many years. No one from her surviving relatives encouraged her to continue schooling. Some thought she should marry and help the family earn the coveted dowry. Others felt pity for her; the nearest high school was 75 kilometers away and pupils had to walk all the way.

Dorcas chose to take the long walk from Nyanthando Primary School through the Kashizi flood plains to Sanjogo Day Secondary School. Arriving with barely enough to survive on, and lacking the full school fees, she had to

live on the benevolence of school teachers. When the numbers in a similar situation increased, school authorities decided to renovate a dilapidated former teacher's house into a makeshift dormitory. This gave birth to a weekly boarding facility for selected needy girl pupils.

Dorcas attempted to stay with distant relatives but due to the hazards of daily canoeing to school, this was impossible. She remembered a teacher and part of his family who recently drowned in a canoe mishap. Her school is on the west bank across Zambezi River, overlooking a hill, which houses Chavuma Central Business District.

"For two years I had to be at the mercy of school authorities and well wishers. Thank GodUSAID throughFAWEZA and the Time to Learn Project has now come to my rescue by paying fees for my last year at Sanjogo"

Dorcas is one of 64 scholarship recipients at her rural school supported by the USAID-funded **Time to Learn Project**. Dorcas now believes that she will go far in her education and fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse. She gets inspiration from her physics teacher, Watson Nsama and the school Head Teacher, Grace Kanema.

Story and picture by Godfrey Chitalu, TTL, Provincial Outreach Coordinator

APPENDIX 2a: COMMUNITY SCHOOL TRIP REPORT

1. Introduction: This is a report on the visits made to select community schools in Central, Lusaka and Southern provinces and in the following districts: Chibombo, Kabwe, Lusaka, Chongwe, Mazabuka and Monze respectively. Two community schools in district were visited and in Southern province the team visited two government schools to observe lessons on the teaching of reading in lower basic. The inclusion of government schools in Southern province was for comparative purposes to learn how the trained teachers were delivering lessons on reading.

2. Objective: The objective of the visitations to select community schools and basic schools was to learn by observing lessons on the teaching of reading with a view to finding out the challenges that hinder the effective teaching and learning of reading by learners. The findings were used to redefine the activities in both the Annual and five year work plans so as to promote early reading in community schools. The following schools were visited and class observations were conducted.

3. Team: The team consisted of officers from Time to Learn project, Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) and DEBS' office in the visited districts. During trip to Southern province, the COR Mrs. Beatrice Mweene from USAID Mission and Rebecca Rhodes from EDC- Washington DC joined the team. Below is the list of the team members.

Name of Officer	Designation	Institution
Mrs. Beatrice C. Mweene	Contracting Officer's Representative	USAID-Mission
Mrs. Rebecca Rhodes	EDC Reading Specialist	EDC
Mr. Paul Machona	Performance and Monitoring Specialist	TTL
Ms. Georgina Hamaimbo	Community Mobilization Specialist	TTL
Mrs. Jane Lisimba	Provincial Outreach Coordinator	TTL
Mr. Godfrey Chitalu,	Provincial Outreach Coordinator	TTL
Mr. Paul Daka	Provincial Outreach Coordinator	TTL
Mr. Francis Phiri	Provincial Outreach Coordinator	TTL
Mrs. Violet Banda	Principle Examination Specialist	ECZ
Mr. Boniface Lisuba	Senior Examination Specialists	ECZ

4. Procedure: Teams paid a courtesy call at the office of the Provincial Education Officer and District Education Board Secretaries Office and gave a brief overview of the Time to Learn project and the objective of the visitation. The DEBS' offices being the custodian of community schools informed the team of the support rendered to them. The support included grants, provision of teaching and learning materials, and attachment of government teachers to mentor community school teachers (on administrative arrangement), supervision of contractions made by schools and monitoring of the teaching and learning process to improve learner performance in community schools, provision of in-service training.

5. Schools visited: The team visited both community and government schools. The list below shows the schools visited where the team conducted class observations on the teaching of reading in the classes in the lower basic.

Province	District	Name of School
Central	Chibombo	1. Masaka Community School 1. Miswa Christian Community School
	Kabwe	1. Kaputula Community School 2. Bwafwano Community School
Lusaka	Lusaka	1. Blessed Vale Community School 2. Chaisa Community School
	Chongwe	1. Chartonnel Community School 2. Chongwe Community School
Southern	Mazabuka	1. Shimungalu Community School 2. Luyobola Community School 3. Kaonga Basic School
	Monze	1. Mutiti Community School 2. Kafwefwe Community School 3. Mwiingamalivwa Community School 4. Chiyobola Basic School 5. Choongo Basic School

6. Characteristics of Community Schools Visited: The community schools visited during this exercise were characterised by: untrained teachers, church supported, community supported, good infrastructure, desks in good condition, no desks / logs resulting in learners sitting on stones, bad infrastructure, lack of infrastructure, limited and lack of teaching and learning materials.

It should also be noted that the three basic schools visited also did not have adequate teaching and learning materials.

7. Class sizes: The enrolment in the community schools visited ranged from 30 to 60 learners on average per class. Due to limited number of teachers, some schools were found to be employing multi-grade teaching.

8. Class Observation: In each district visited, two teams were made and each visited one community school. However, having observed classes in community schools in Lusaka and Central provinces, it was decided that the team conducts observations in one government school in each district to also learn how lessons on reading were delivered.

To have order in the class observations, the team used a check list as a guide and collected any additional information pertaining to the delivery of the reading lessons. After class observation, the team held discussions with teachers concerning the preparations management of the teaching and learning process. The teams also collected information during the delivery of the reading lesson. Teams observed any classes from grades 1 to 4 in both in community and government schools.

After class observations, teams held discussions with teachers to learn from them among others how they prepare their lessons, materials used in lesson preparations, teaching and learning aids, learner participation and performance of learners particularly in reading.

9. Conclusions from the field visit: The field visit to community schools revealed that:

9.1 Teachers:

9.1.1. Professional Qualification: Majority of teachers are untrained and do not have the academic or practical qualifications, and as such they are not competent to deliver lessons on reading effectively. This was evidenced by some lessons in which even the teacher did not exhibit any knowledge of the content of the lesson. Some teachers mixed the teaching of reading, comprehension, word building and presenting some words in wrong tenses. It was also found that teachers were not even oriented to teach reading.

9.1.2. Academic Qualification: Most teachers are not academically qualified though they have reached grade 12. Some teachers though are grade 12 do not have grade 12 general certificate because they have just passed in one, two or three subjects instead of 6 which is a requirement for one to obtain a general certificate. The team found that some teachers were grade 9, and this poses a challenge with regard to the ability of such teachers to teach reading. Some teachers taught learners wrong spellings, pronunciation and even wrong tenses.

9.1.3 Lesson Plans: While every teacher is expected to plan their lesson, teachers in community schools rarely do so due to lack of materials and competence. The team found that in some schools a head teacher developed a template for teachers to fill in the lesson plans and each one of them has a box file. It was reported that the initiative was to assist teachers to plan their lessons.

9.1.4 Record Keeping: It was found that teachers do not take any record of learner performance in reading, and there are no policies on remedial work for slow learners and no homework policy. The team was informed that teachers were not paying any particular attention to teaching reading. Perhaps this is because there has been no emphasis on teaching reading.

9.1.5. Learner Participation: Teachers observed were conscious of involving both genders in the teaching and learning process. However, teachers were not explicit to indicate to a learner the answer was wrong before they moved on to asking another learner to try giving the correct answer. Giving clear answer in whatever form makes other learners not to repeat the answer.

9.1.6Learner Performance in Reading: Currently the performance of learners in reading was reported to be poor in all the schools visited. In some classes such as grade 4, only 4 learners were reported to be able to at least read some words though not fluently. The team did not find any second grade that was able to read any word even in local language.

9.1.7Strategies to Improve the teaching of Reading: In some schools it was reported that some extra tuition is given to learners in order to improve the performance and not necessarily in reading. There was no school that was found to have put in place any initiatives to increase the culture of reading among learners.

9.1.8 Availability and utilisation of Teaching and Learning Materials: Generally, there is lack of teaching and learning materials or materials of any kinds in the classrooms. Schools do not have any reading materials. Teachers are using one pupil's book to teach a class of 30 learners or more to teach reading / literacy. A teacher is forced to read a word or show a picture from a book and expects learners to see the word or picture from afar. This scenario makes it impossible for the teachers to either plan their lessons or to teach effectively because they have no access to teachers' guides or syllabi which are needed in lesson preparation and delivery respectively.

In addition to lack of teaching and learning materials, one school in Chibombo did not have a chalk board but had a small piece of what looked like a chalk board. The teacher did not have even a stool to sit on.

9.1.9 Use of Primary Reading Program (PRP) Methodology: Though PRP has been mainstreamed in the curriculum, there was no evidence of the use of PRP methodology by untrained teachers in the visited community schools. However, two trained teachers in two community schools in Kabwe and Mazabuka respectively were found to be employing the methodology when teaching reading in a grade 1 class. The lessons were conducted very well though the challenge was lack of pupils' books for the groups that were not at the teaching station to use for their assignment. No untrained teacher was found using PRP methodology to teach reading.

9.1.10 Challenges with Regard to Teaching Reading: Teachers lamented over lack of teaching and learning materials in schools. Schools that had received donated materials reported the inappropriateness of the materials making it very difficult for them to plan lessons. Majority of teachers in the schools visited taught reading from a copy of a pupil's book.

Teachers also indicated lack of knowledge, orientation and skills to prepare lesson plans as well as delivering lessons effectively. It was indicated that though schools that have trained teachers were conducting some orientation for untrained teachers, the staff turnover in schools was very high.

9.1.11 Issues around Children in Difficult Situations: Though majority of learners in community schools are vulnerable, it was reported that some children were in very difficult situations because of the high levels of poverty in some households. Some children did not have decent dressing, looked dirty and were not able to have three meals a day.

9.1.12 Defilement cases involving learners: Though defilement cases were said to be happening in some communities, only one school in Chongwe reported a case that involved a learner from their school and informed the team that the case was in the court of law.

9.1.13 HIV and AIDS work place Policy in the school: Though issues of HIV and AIDS, Life Skills are integrated in the curriculum, schools visited did not have any work place policy around HIV and AIDS. This could be attributed to lack of syllabi in schools. However, it was reported that some head teachers told teachers to spend few minutes talking about HIV and AIDS before the beginning and end of a lesson. However, it was not clear as to the kind of messages that were given to the learners since it was left to each individual teacher. It was not even clear whether all teachers carried out the instructions at all. There was no school found to be providing organised guidance and counselling services to the learners. However, one school in Chongwe that is church supported reported that counselling services were being provided by the pastor.

9.1.14 Challenges to Teaching Reading in Schools: One of the challenges of teaching reading was lack of teaching and learning materials. Teachers reported that in some cases they used borrowed book from a nearby government school. Teaching reading required a number of pupils books at least at (1:3) ratio to enable learners have access to a book.

Lack of orientation to the teaching of reading was also a challenge. Teachers in community schools heavily depend on the knowledge they have in a particular subject based on their experience during their time at school. Majority of teachers in the visited schools indicated that they had not attended any in-service training. However, it was learnt that in Chibombo and Chongwe districts some teachers had undergone an orientation on teaching reading with handwriting.

9.1.15 Improving the teaching of Reading: Provision of teaching and learning and other reading materials in community school may improve the teaching of reading. Orientation of teachers in the current pedagogy as well as improving of the knowledge base of teachers was also necessary in effective delivery of lessons on reading. Support to teachers in terms of incentive, for example salary, would also work as a motivating factor for retention of teachers.

9.1.16 Community Support to Schools: Community schools are established by communities and therefore supported by the same communities. In few cases schools may be supported by an NGO, CBO or church organisation. Schools established by an individual are also supported by the proprietor until ownership is created among the community.

Teachers in the schools visited reported that their allowance ranged from K50,000 to K600,000. This kind of allowance is not even enough for one to support a family since some of these teachers have families and school going children. They are not even able to rent a decent house resulting in most of them staying in nearby villages.

It was reported that communities agree to contribute a minimal fee per child to go towards the allowance of teachers. While these contributions are supposed to be made by each household, some are not even able to raise the money.

Summary: Reading in community schools is not being delivered effectively due to a number of factors. It is therefore important to implement some interventions to improve the teaching and subsequently increase the reading levels at lower basic.

Written by Georgina Hamaimbo
Community Mobilisation Specialist
June 2012

APPENDIX 2b: COMMUNITY SCHOOL TRIP REPORT

Mazabuka and Monze Field Visit, 11th-12th June, 2012

I) Context

The TTL program had organized a field visit to certain government and community schools on the two work days immediately following my arrival in country. The trip was intended to serve as a sort of informal assessment of the schools' teaching practices, degree of community support, experiences and attitudes vis-à-vis students, particularly girls, affected by Zambia's HIV/AIDS epidemic, and options for support to orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs).

II) Participants

Participating in the trip were the senior staff of the TTL program: Mme. Georgina Hamaimbo (community mobilization specialist) and Mr. Paul Machona (monitoring and evaluation specialist), the provincial outreach coordinators hired to date (Jane, Godfey, Paul, and Francis), and myself as the reading specialist. Also participating were TTL's COR from the USAID/Zambia mission, two colleagues from the directorate of school assessment (ECZ), and several colleagues from the district level provincial offices (DEBS). In all approximately 10 people participated in the visits. This larger group divided itself into smaller work groups on both of the visit days: 2 work groups on the first day and 3 on the second.

III) Activities

In this write-up, we report only on the activities of the group with which the EDC Reading Specialist travelled. The major activities of that group were:

- A visit to the DEBS office in Mazabuka
- A visit to the Shimmingalu Community School
- A visit to the Kaonga Primary School (a government basic school)
- A visit to the DEBS office in Monze
- A visit to the Kafuefue Primary School

IV) Observations

This section is divided into general observations, and then into observations by school.

General Observations:

- DEBS offices are busy and crowded. Clearly, a great deal of administrative work occupies their time. The two where the team had visited had not received previous courtesy visits from the TTL program.

- DEBS personnel are only sometimes familiar with where schools are to be found, which indicates that they do not make routine monitoring visits to all of the schools in their district. This is most likely due to lack of funds. This suggests that the TTL program will need to subsidize the visits that it hopes to have DEBS monitoring personnel conduct.
- DEBS' offices were only partially connected to internet and/or "digitized." Most documentation and tracking still appeared to be being conducted using paper copy.
- How money and resources flow between DEBS offices and the community schools was not entirely clear. Sometimes, if a community school is registered, they may receive books or even some stipend support for salaries from some DEBS offices. TTL will need to have a firm understanding of these mechanisms in each of the places we work.
- The number of community schools per DEBS office is high, sometimes as high as 25 or 30 community schools per office. A district-level assessment of each of the schools in each of the offices where the program is to work will be necessary.
- The system monitoring forms for teacher observation remain general, and do not specifically address reading instruction.
- Teachers from across the grade levels informally report that between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the children in their classrooms cannot read.
- Teachers by and large follow the pattern of bilingualism prescribed by the government, with all of grade one being taught in a Zambian language and with classes starting from grade two beginning to be taught in English.
- Materials, including reading materials, are not uniformly available in the community schools. Some have materials that they have found through affiliation with a religious institution or another donor. At times, the DEBS may provide some material. But there is an overall lack of material, with the cases where material is present in sufficient quantity for all students to use it being few and far between.
- The materials that exist, with the exception of those provided by RoomtoRead, come in the form of textbooks and/or workbooks. There are insufficient numbers of storybooks or other books to be read for pleasure available to the children in the schools.
- Schools tend to have a mix of teachers, some holding government official diplomas as teachers (these teachers in Zambia are known as qualified teachers) and some having no such diploma (known as unqualified teachers). However, in the community schools, in general, there were more unqualified than qualified teachers. It was not evident that holding the Zambian qualification to teach made a substantial difference in the pedagogy employed, but it was certainly evident that those with that qualification had higher levels of command of English than those not holding that qualification.
- It was evident that pre-service training in Zambia, through which one can gain a "qualifying" diploma, does not feature specific information about how to teach reading, in any language. When specifically asked whether they had learned to teach reading during their pre-service training, most teachers evaded the question and/or, if they

responded “yes,” were not able to explain what about reading they had learned when preparing to be teachers.

- Sometimes, schools may have active in-service training; for example, one of the community schools we visited discussed meetings once per term with the zonal in-service coordinator (ZIC) and was able to show us that they had an on-staff school in-service coordinator (SISC). This, however, is not always the case.
- Two reading programs, in particular, had gained name-recognition and fairly widespread use in the schools visited. These were Zambia’s Primary Reading Program (PRP) and the THRAS program (Teaching Handwriting through Reading and Spelling). However, where both were implemented, they were implemented only partially, with either a portion of the materials or a portion of the methodology or a portion of both missing.
- Teachers displayed no knowledge of the importance of phonemic awareness, no ability to use writing (as encoding) to assist in teaching sound-symbol relationships, little ability to teach decoding, no knowledge of how to practice fluency, and little knowledge of how to reinforce text comprehension. Text conventions were never explicitly taught in any of the lessons observed. Much reciting after the teacher and much copying off of the blackboard were observed.
- Teachers displayed little or no knowledge of how to monitor individual children’s progress in reading, at any grade level. Whole-class activities, even in the “evaluation” sections of lessons, were the ones most frequently observed.
- Some schools still possessed a radio distributed by EDC during prior USAID-funded work, but it was not clear that they were using the radio programs (the radio observed was found in the head teacher’s office). Determining whether the EDC radio programs are used would be a wise activity to incorporate in any upcoming school mapping exercise.
- It was, overall, difficult to gain much information on sensitive topics such as gender equity, “defilement” of girl children (the term employed in Zambia for rape of or incest with under-age girls), HIV/AIDS prevalence, advocacy, or treatment, and/or tracking of orphans and vulnerable children in the schools. Most of these discussions occurred in national language, but it was still clear that it demanded a lot of effort on the part of the Zambian facilitators to “draw their interlocutors out” to speak about these topics.
- It was unclear whether there were guidance and counseling services, of a professional type, available to any of the children in the schools. Sometimes we were told that there were, but by all appearances there really were not.
- The degree of community support for the community schools seemed to vary. Some communities were obviously making sacrifices to support their school, with teachers reporting payment of 150,000 kwacha per month to each member of staff. In other cases, it seemed that “outside” organizations, like the Catholic church, were providing the majority of the support for the school.

Shimingalu Community School

- Grade one to nine community school
- Subsidized by the Catholic church with grants of about 600,000 kwacha/month
- 8 teachers, 4 qualified, 4 not
- The Primary Reading Program (PRP) in practice in the lower grades, with about one book available for each of two children. The teacher we observed taught in a Zambian national language.
- The teacher implementing the program scored very unevenly on the Standards Based Classroom Observation Protocol (SCOPE) literacy assessment, a specialized teacher observation tool used by the EDC Reading Specialist. Her scores for fostering a collaborative environment, for encouraging reflection, and for managing her instructional time effectively during reading were quite high (3 to 4). However, her scores on all items related to explicit instruction of skills were lower, hovering between a 1 and a 2 on items B through J of the tool.
- Approximately half the children in the grade two class we observed could not read their alphabet in the local, national language (as determined by playing a letter recognition game at the board).
- Records of individual children's progress in reading were not evident in the classroom.

Kaonga Basic School

- This was a large government basic school
- The first group observed the grade four class, with 54 students attending
- The teacher conducted her lesson in English. She placed the letter W on the board and asked children to generate words starting with W. Each word suggested, she wrote on the board. Then she asked students to generate sentences using the words on the board. After some oral exchange, she asked students to write one or two sentences using the words on the board.
- The teacher devoted close to ½ the lesson to handing out and then marking the copybooks where this writing was to take place.
- My own ratings of this class using the SCOPE literacy tool indicated that the teacher had a fairly gentle and encouraging attitude, but little command of how to engage students in reading or help students learn how to read.
- The children struggled to write independent sentences and the same two or three sentences were used/copied by the majority of children in the room.
- The EDC Reading Specialist circulated in the room and asked many children to read what they had written in their book. About 1/3 of the children to whom this request was made could not read what they had written; this led the team to conclude that children's decoding and comprehension skills in English were not well-developed.

- The teacher when marking the books provided little or no explanation to students about what was incorrect in their work.
- Room toRead was present in this school and had installed a school library, which was staffed by a JICA volunteer.

Kafue Community School

- This was a rural community school about an hour's drive from the town of Monze.
- The school was in the middle of a field and a number of smaller farming communities.
- The team met with four teachers at the school. The head teacher was absent.
- Of the teachers with whom we met, only one had a diploma from an institution intended to prepare teachers to work in Zambian schools.
- The team was told that each of the teachers at that school is paid 150,000 kwacha per month by the community.
- There are also fees charged to the students at the school-7500 kwacha per term per child.
- This school had practically no materials in evidence and many of the classes met outside and around the small thatch structure.
- Teachers had no access to syllabi or other official government documents.
- Teachers in this school did not have any access to in-service training.
- The EDC Reading Specialist spent an extensive amount of time working in English with the grade five class. The children did know their alphabet in English. However, their command of English vocabulary left much to be desired; each child knew only one or two words in English. They were not at all accustomed to thinking on their own in English and they had no material from which to work in English. Of the 13 students in that class, only one was identified who may be able in the long run to pass the 7th grade exam.
- The team was not able to observe younger students in this school, although we waited to see if they would arrive. So it was impossible to gauge the degree to which students might have been learning to read and write in Chitonga, which was the national language of the area visited. However, judging from the level of reading ability amongst the older students, which was quite low, and from the fact that teachers have no access to in-service training in reading, it was obvious that reading instruction in this school left much room for improvement.

V) Conclusions

- Most teachers in the schools we saw do not know how to teach children to read. This is a pedagogy and methods issue, not a language issue. There was no evidence that children could read with ease in Zambian national languages.

- Most teachers in the schools we observed have never had access and do not have access now to training courses that will enable them to learn how to teach how to read. This is true of “qualified” and “unqualified” teachers; having a “qualification” does not gain you the ability to teach reading.
- Reading instruction was not evidently superior in government basic schools than in the community schools visited; many of the patterns of ignoring the skill sets of decoding, fluency, and comprehension were noted in classrooms in both community and government schools. The one skill area that seemed to receive explicit and intentional attention on the teachers’ part was vocabulary development.
- Schools are grossly under-resourced for reading instruction, unless they have had assistance from a partner organization such as Room to Read.
- Individual assessment and evaluation of students, continuous or summative, is hardly ever conducted in such a way that students or teachers might know what to do differently in order to read better.
- Head teachers are burdened with a multitude of organizational and administrative tasks, and it is difficult for them to devote time and attention to instructional leadership.
- In-service training systems, (school in-service, zonal in-service, PEST, DEST, and ZEST), are not achieving widespread coverage of the community schools. By and large, teachers in those schools have minimal opportunity to engage with or learn from those systems. Where they are able to do that, it seems that they have to pay into the system.
- There is little incentive for teachers to remain in teaching, either in community or government schools. Teacher mobility is sure to be a challenge both to USAID’s programming and to the success of any reading intervention.
- Communities are not engaged in specifically focusing on the question of reading in the community schools.
- Community support for other activities or needs in the community schools varies widely. Some communities are more involved than others in supporting their schools.
- Issues related to gender-based violence, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and vulnerability are omnipresent but not systematically addressed in the schools we visited. It is not clear who is responsible for identifying complications or problems of a psycho-social nature and it is not clear what someone who had noticed such an issue could/should do to resolve it.

VI) Recommendations

- TTL must start from square one in reading instruction with our teachers. This will mean tailoring a clear and easy-to-follow program for them that enables them to provide instruction in all the core skill sets of reading and writing.
- TTL will have to select a REASONABLE number of schools to assist, as the assistance required will be extensive in order to make positive changes on the ground.

- The TTL program must provide clear and easy-to-follow strategies and techniques for accomplishing the transition to English in the upper levels (grade 3 and 4) of primary school.
- TTL will have to provide significant amounts of reading materials to the schools assisted. This will be a major budgetary commitment.
- Focal areas for TTL training in reading will include: techniques for decoding, fluency, comprehension, production of individual writing, and text conventions. They will also need to provide guidance and techniques for individual assessment and for reading remediation. The number of topics needing to be addressed for teachers in the TTL program could easily fill the syllabus of a year-long university-level course in the US.
- TTL must devise strategies to connect community school teachers with extant in-service training systems, strengthening those systems at the same time so that they are capable of supporting improved reading instruction.
- TTL must explore how head teachers and perhaps one associate per school can be helped to take the lead on instructional leadership in reading.
- TTL will need to help communities engage with the specific question of how to ensure that their own young children learn to read. The grants program offers an opportunity for this.
- TTL has much to do on reinforcing diagnosis and appropriate treatment or referral of a range of problems related to bullying, GBV, illness, stigma, HIV/AIDS, etc. in the communities where the program will work. The entire health component of the program should focus on these aspects.
- TTL will have to define and implement a strategy for interaction with provincial and district offices of education to attempt to harmonize its activities in reading and health in the community schools with those of partners, like Room to Read, devoted to assisting government schools.
- TTL will need to participate actively in Lusaka-level central meetings, both in education as concerns reading and in health as relates to care of orphans and vulnerable children, so that lessons learned through the program can inform future policy work and development.

APPENDIX 3:REBECCA RHODES, EDC READING SPECIALIST TRIP REPORT

Trip Report Zambia Time toLearn Program Rebecca H. Rhodes TDY June 6-28

I) Introduction

Ms. Rhodes is a full-time EDC employee who specializes in teacher professional development and the teaching of reading. For the past four and ½ years, she has been posted in Bamako, Mali as the technical specialist for the USAID/PHARE program. Ms. Rhodes' trip to Zambia focused on assisting the Time to Learn (TTL) program to assess what staffing, financial, and technical changes would be necessary to enable the program to respond to USAID's worldwide goal of assisting 1.5 million children to become readers by the year 2015.

II) Background to the Trip

The Zambia Time to Learn program was designed several years ago to serve as a broad platform of support to community schools across Zambia. This was due to the fact that the program was primarily to benefit orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), and the vast majority of OVCs are schooled in Zambia's community schools. (It should be noted that community schools make up almost a third of the country's schools). According to the original contract, TTL included several highly flexible mechanisms in order to be able to tailor assistance for each, individual school. These mechanisms included a provision for developing school improvement plans for each school, a provision for small grants for schools needing to fund work under their school improvement plans, and a provision to assist other, better-resourced private schools to support the community schools in becoming more stable and higher quality service providers. In addition, the original design of Time to Learn called for the program to be the vehicle through which community schools could be "institutionalized," meaning brought into conformity with government statutes from an administrative, financial, and pedagogical standpoint.

This broad-ranging original design had the advantages of leaving much room for tailoring support to each school in ways that each individual school community would have found most beneficial. However, the design was not in terribly close alignment with the current USAID education strategy. Under this strategy, all work funded in education by the agency must serve one of three goals: a) improving **reading** skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015, b) improving the ability of tertiary and workforce development programs to produce a workforce with relevant skills, and c) increasing equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments for 15 million learners.

In the case of Zambia TTL, the program must support the first of these goals, focusing on improving children's reading skills. While arguably, developing a school improvement plan, or revisiting the staffing plan, the infrastructure, or the finances of a community school, as originally envisioned in the first program design, might have an impact on reading skills, the direct impact of such shifts on reading outcomes during the period of performance of a typical USAID program remains unclear. Therefore, a need existed to align the TTL program more closely with the goals of the worldwide USAID education strategy.

Ms. Rhodes' trip to help begin this alignment was based on a four-point scope of work:

1. Conduct review of existing TTL documents including program description, technical proposal, work plans and PMP
2. Design specific reading interventions to be addressed through project activities, including within teacher learning circles

3. Design strategy for materials development for teacher resources including learning circle facilitators guides, guided self study, ICT resources
4. Provide support to TTL staff on the revised strategy

III) Progress Achieved Under Scope of Work

The table below indicates the progress made in each area of the scope of work during the trip.

Scope of Work Point	Scope of Work Outcome
1. Conduct review of existing TTL documents including program description, technical proposal, work plans and PMP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All documents thoroughly reviewed ➤ Focus on reading and level of effort devoted to reading found insufficient for the achievement of student results in 15-24months' time ➤ Major remarks on the original documentation included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The comparatively small size of the available Education DA money (12.6 million dollars) for a nation-wide reading reform; many USAID-funded programs reaching all provinces of a country are considerably larger than that; • The comparatively large size of the pass-through scholarship program (close to 13 million dollars) funded through PEPFAR resources and allocated to two large Zambian subcontractors; • The improbability that the program could affect reading outcomes and raise testing scores in 7 national languages and English (8 languages total) during its period of performance; • The incongruence of the broader vision of institutionally strengthening community schools with a more precise and narrow vision of raising children's test scores in reading; • The seeming disconnect between activities funded under the PEPFAR budget (17.4 million dollars in total with 13 million dollars committed to scholarship programs) and the activities funded under the education DA stream; • The lack of a sufficient number of staff assigned to the TTL program to ensure strong technical results in the teaching of reading and the mitigation of the effects of HIV/AIDS; • The large number of indicators assigned to TTL under each of the sub intermediate results of the mission's own performance monitoring plan; • An insufficient degree of focus on reading in the TTL program's original performance monitoring plan. ➤ Several brainstorming sessions with both in-country and out-of-country program technical staff conducted to address these insufficiencies; ➤ Several meetings conducted with USAID/Zambia representatives on these different questions and issues during the course of the trip; ➤ All documents (technical description, work plan, budget, and PMP) completely rewritten and submitted for review to the funding mission on the 5th of July, 2012.
2. Design specific reading interventions to be addressed through project activities, including within teacher learning circles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reading interventions in materials development, teacher training, teacher supervision, continuous assessment, summative assessment (i.e. EGRA), and community involvement conceived of, described, and budgeted in the updated, aligned program strategy; ➤ Relevant focal areas for work in reading identified through a field visit to Monze and Mazabuka. This field visit demonstrated that four of the five skill sets in reading are rarely focused on by Zambian teachers. These are: phonemic and phonetic awareness (including decoding), fluency, comprehension, and print conventions. (Teachers do demonstrate a rudimentary knowledge of how to conduct vocabulary development exercises). ➤ Field visits revealed an absolute lack of expertise at any level in the use of emergent writing

Scope of Work Point	Scope of Work Outcome
	<p>as an aid to reading mastery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher learning circles and other teacher-level interventions will focus on these topics, as well as focusing on deepening teachers' understanding of how to support vocabulary development
3. Design strategy for materials development for teacher resources including learning circle facilitators guides, guided self study, ICT resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ TTL's primary strategy for materials development for all classrooms associated with the program will be to work with teams from the CDC, ESS, and ECZ to develop these materials; ➤ Important decisions about linguistic focus underlie the progress of any materials development; these decisions were made during this trip and have resulted in TTL focusing on Cinyanja, Citonga, and Cibemba. (This last will be achieved via collaboration with the sister program, Read To Succeed); ➤ A "road map" (also known as a "scope and sequence" for all materials development will be completed with each ministry work team before moving forward on any one particular document; ➤ Official approval will be sought for any materials provided to community schools, to ensure that they are classified as Zambian materials; ➤ Ministry teams will be assisted jointly, wherever possible, by both Time To Learn and Read to Succeed specialists to guarantee that materials provided to both government and community schools are coherent and official; ➤ Thanks to assistance from EDC technology specialist, Simon Richmond, a "dual-purpose" ICT strategy for teacher training and classroom materials support drafted during the three-week trip.
4. Provide support to TTL staff on the revised strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal TTL meetings and meetings with external interested parties (donor representatives, ministry representatives, etc) conducted to help revise program strategy; ➤ Technical description, workplan, PMP, and budget aligned with the USAID education strategy drafted during the trip and submitted on the 5th of July just after the trip; ➤ A draft results log frame developed with the program head of evaluation, Diane Gardsbane and the monitoring and evaluation team; ➤ Support provided to the TTL team in articulating the revised strategy during the program launch; ➤ Preliminary plans put in place to bring in additional technical assistants during the transition to the new COP and the critical July-September work period; ➤ Support provided to the technical staff hiring process underway during Rhodes' TDY.

IV) **Recommendations Provided by Point of Scope of Work**

These outcomes were all shared with USAID/Zambia on the July 6, 2012 out brief held at the TTL offices. Present were Beatrice Mweene, USAID AOTR, Robie Siamwiza, acting COP, Georgina Hamaimbo, Community Mobilization Specialist, and Paul Machona, Monitoring and Evaluation specialist.

1. Conduct review of existing TTL documents including program description, technical proposal, work plans and PMP

- To achieve reading results in grade two as required by USAID, it will be necessary to focus program efforts to a much greater extent than envisioned under the original design;
- All future submissions to USAID/Zambia should clearly delineate the costs borne by the 12.6 million dollars of funding that Time toLearn receives through DA Assistance and which are borne by the 17.4 million dollars of PEPFAR funding under the contract. This will facilitate financial tracking, reporting, and any audit functions that either EDC or USAID may wish in the long run

- to perform;
- TTL will need to reinforce its human resources and staffing plan on the ground in order to achieve desired results;
 - In the current context, where USAID/Zambia possesses a program (Step Up) that focuses on ministry systems and on policy support, it is advisable that Time to Learn define itself as a **classroom and community-focused** program;
 - It is advisable that TTL avoid over-committing about “institutionalizing” community schools; in the last analysis, for a ministry to “institutionalize” a school, it must employ the staff of that school and provide it with considerable materials and resources; this is rarely the case for community schools in Zambia today and TTL’s powers to make this a reality are limited. TTL should instead accept responsibility for **advocating** with the district and provincial offices of education for the provision of material and/or financial support to community schools
 - It would be advisable, in the alignment, to create greater coherence between the education-funded and PEPFAR-funded activities;
 - Based on that need, it is recommended that the aligned, revised TTL program run on the following four objectives:
 - Improving **reading** outcomes for grade one to four community school students.
 - Guiding community school leaders and advocates to leverage assistance for learners who are OVCs.
 - Providing the MOESVTEE with a replicable model of academic and psychosocial support for community schools that mitigates HIV and AIDS’ impact on education.
 - Contributing to the development and implementation of government policy relating to community schools.
 - It is recommended that the program operate not in ten, but in six provinces: Eastern, Lusaka, Southern, Copperbelt, Central, and Muchinga provinces. Three factors contributed to the selection of these provinces: a) a need to focus resources for early grade reading on a reasonable number of national languages, b) the geographic distribution of the community schools, and c) the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in the selected provinces;
 - An innovative collaboration with the sister USAID program, Read to Succeed, will enable TTL to reach Bemba speaking provinces (Central, Copperbelt, and Muchinga); Read to Succeed will be supporting the development of tools in Cibemba from the outset;
 - As feasible within the current program budget, some technology (i.e. cell phone applications) should be incorporated as a part of these classroom resource kits.
 - In aligning the TTL program with the USAID worldwide education strategy, and in revising the core documents to reflect this alignment, the team should also explore:
 - **Indirectly impacting** reading performance through the dissemination of new policies or guidelines regarding reading in community schools to all provinces and also through the sharing of lessons from the above activities with community school stakeholders from around the country in annual community school for a;
 - **Ensuring that CAMFED and FAWWEZA** incorporate both HIV and AIDS awareness AND remedial instruction in reading and language into their work with their scholarship recipients as a means of increasing TTL’s indirect impact on reading;
 - **Exploring with FAWWEZA** how best to harmonize future disbursements of scholarship monies so that girls from community schools are among the majority of recipients, as a means of contributing to USAID’s intermediate result in increasing educational equity;
 - **Devoting non-scholarship PEPFAR funds** to community mobilization, awareness-raising, and counseling and psychosocial support services in the communities where TTL is working to raise reading results; the overall goal of these activities would be to create a nurturing environment at the school level to facilitate the improved

mastery of reading, and;

- **Actively pursuing** public-private and other partnership arrangements that could lead to expanding or deepening the program's impact and/or providing an additional hedge for the sustainability of the interventions in the community schools.

2. Design specific reading interventions to be addressed through project activities, including within teacher learning circles

- Specific reading interventions provided should help teachers focus on classroom work supporting: phonemic and phonetic awareness (including decoding), fluency, comprehension, and print conventions. These are four areas of reading instruction that we did not see sufficiently practiced during field visits and classroom observations. Teachers did demonstrate a rudimentary knowledge of how to conduct vocabulary development exercises; this knowledge should be strengthened as well;
- The use of emergent writing as an aid to reading mastery, an area in which EDC has significant expertise, should also be emphasized in teacher training.
- TTL should support the ministry in conducting all of the following reading interventions:
 - The updating of the reading standards for early grades with the Ministry of Education so that they specifically address each of these skill areas;
 - The completion of skills maps for each language and grade level showing what children must be able to do within each of the five competency areas at various points in the school year;
 - The creation of classroom kits that prioritize the use of existing or locally-made material to support improved reading instruction; the one cautionary note in relation to this is the importance of having decodable texts to support each element in the skills map (see point three of SOW below);
 - Professional development for teachers offered through on-site school meetings, cluster meetings, and training at the district/provincial level in all of the skill areas described above;
 - Professional development for district and provincial employees in the skill of monitoring and assessing reading instruction;
 - The introduction of appropriate, cost-effective, and replicable technologies for the support of reading instruction;
 - Non-monetary incentive systems to reward teachers that make a concerted effort to apply the program offered to them through TTL training;
 - Community mobilization to engage community members in supporting the reading success of the children in their schools;
 - Regular formative (continuous) and summative evaluation of the enrolled children's reading progress, through e-EGRA testing and/or other, simpler formats designed to allow teachers and community members to understand how well or poorly their children are progressing towards early-grade reading.
- TTL's professional development courses for community school teachers must be more in-depth than what teacher learning circles can provide. They should include a variety of low-cost in-service training opportunities (at the provincial, zonal, or 'cluster' (i.e. tiny group of schools) level, as well as, where possible, coursework in association with colleges of education. This latter type of coursework, if possible, should be supported as a means of achieving eventual qualification as a teacher. Appropriate technology should be included as part of the professional development initiatives wherever possible, and a separate plan by an EDC technology specialist has been submitted to that effect;
- TTL must provide support to the provincial and district offices of education for improved

monitoring of reading instruction in community schools, including data collection and tracking on teachers' performance in teaching reading and children's performance on early grade reading tasks in the appropriate languages; the SCOPE tool should be used for this task;

- EDC will be required to submit EGRA results to USAID in 15 to 24 months from now; EDC should move forward quickly on designing e-EGRA applications for Cinyanja, Citonga, and Cibemba to help fulfill that requirement;
- EDC's interventions to improve reading should include components to **mobilize communities** to engage in supporting their children's acquisition of competency in early grade reading; the revised program description prepared for the July 5 submission contains considerable detail in this regard;
- As budget allows, TTL should **conduct research with ministry counterparts from national, provincial, and district levels** to inform policy dialogue regarding the government's stated ambition of upgrading the community schools and to examine how the instruction of reading might be more explicitly taken into account in an updated version of the OGCS guidelines for community schools.

3. Design strategy for materials development for teacher resources including learning circle facilitators guides, guided self study, ICT resources

- The primary strategy for accomplishing this must be the formation of appropriate ministry teams that benefit from technical assistance from TTL. A good first step on asking the ministry to name the Cinyanja working team was taken with the joint meeting with Read to Succeed on Tuesday the 26th of June. These working teams must meet regularly and be seminally involved in the creation of all of the support materials for the reading initiative, as a means of increasing the program's chances of sustainability in the long run.
- An additional important part of the strategy will be to ensure that TTL has a high-level of knowledgeable technical support for the improvement of the teaching of reading. The particular skill of knowing how to teach children to read is not a frequently found skill in the Zambian workforce, even among high-level educators in the Zambian ministry of education. TimeToLearn will need to staff a deputy chief of party for literacy position (or some other such high-level post) with an individual that is familiar with designing and implementing this type of reading program.
- A third important element of the strategy is to be as cost-effective as possible, by using if possible existing material or low-cost, no-cost material for reading instruction. This includes what the ministry already possesses as well as EDC's Read Right Now program for early grade reading;
- A fourth important part of the strategy is to create harmony between the branch of the program focused on reading success and the branch focused on school safety and wellness and HIV and AIDS awareness. It will be important that TTL ensure strong and visionary leadership for the PEPFAR-funded side of the contract so that an emphasis on health as a vehicle for success in reading and academics can carry through the work financed under the PEPFAR portion of the award.

4. Provide support to TTL staff on the revised strategy

- TTL staff all need significant additional support to implement the revised program in a timely manner with high-quality results. This support must include:
 - The immediate identification and hiring of **two senior professional**s to lead the program's two major domains of intervention (improvement in reading outcomes and improvement in school-level health, safety, and HIV and AIDS responsiveness)
 - The completion of the hiring of the mid-level technical staff;
 - An all-staff orientation to the program, its goals and objectives, their working teams, and their job descriptions;
 - In-house professional development for current staff on the teaching of reading, on community mobilization, and on the provision of psychosocial support at the

- community level;
- The immediate development of strong working relationships with critical ministry counterparts so that the work of preparing classroom materials for December teacher trainings can commence;
- At least a three-week TDY in monitoring and evaluation and database design to assist the monitoring and evaluation division to complete the PMP and organize a database backed up on a server to track and report indicators;
- An intensive orientation for the incoming COP led by staff familiar with the Zambian context and the implications of the alignment to reading for the TTL program.

V) Additional Observations and Recommendations

- This is a high-profile program for USAID/Zambia and EDC to date has not been seen as sufficiently responsive. Important progress was made in creating open channels of communication between the USAID education team and EDC's senior leadership team during this trip. Those channels must remain open and regular communication take place across them for the program to stabilize and run well.
- This mechanism is a contract and all alignments, changes, and revisions to the way the work is conducted should be approved by the CO of the USAID/Zambia mission. The EDC Project Director should keep OSP in the loop and apprised of all developments with the program's operations.
- The USAID/Zambia education team is rather large and the portfolio of programs administered, all focusing on the education strategy's first goal, is considerable. The leadership of the education team at AID/Zambia needs to keep a close eye on developments with TTL to ensure that progress is made in an acceptable fashion and that communications and instructions from the mission are clear, precise, and coherent.
- A better technical staffing plan is necessary to ensure that results are achieved.
- An extremely thorough orientation for the new COP will be necessary to ensure that he can take the program in hand.

Trip Report Annex: Major Trip Activities and Meetings

Thursday June 7: Evening arrival

Friday (June 8)

- Meet TTL staff
- Review of program documents (see SOW point one)

Monday and Tuesday (June 11 and 12)

- Field visits in Mazabuka and Monze

Wednesday (June 13)

- Morning meeting at Step Up with Ginny Lambert, Luis Rodriguez and USAID team re: impact monitoring for USAID/Zambia
- Attend Joint Annual Review (JAR) meeting
- Participate in planning and strategy call with EDC/DC

Thursday (June 14)

- Team meetings on conclusions from field visits
- Field visit trip report completion
- 2 interviews with potential candidates for TPD position

Fri (June 15)

- Planning for program launch
- Planning meeting with Read to Succeed
- Development of first draft of aligned program description

Mon (June 18)

- Development of draft phasing plan and budget for July 5 submission

Tues (June 19)

- Completion of program launch flyer
- Development of draft work plans for both the DA funding and the PEPFAR funding

Wed (June 20)

- All-morning meeting with JICA re teacher professional development
- Development of draft PMP for July 5th submission

Thurs (June 21)

- Revisions to draft PMP and draft budget
- Meeting with Happy Readers representative

Fri (June 22)

- Meeting with Beatrice Mweene, TTL COR
- Meeting with FAWEZA

- Meeting with VBOB
- Meeting with another candidate for teacher development specialist
- Meeting on Budget

Sat (June 23)

- Preparation of PMP feedback for Beatrice
- Completion of draft TTL work plan

Mon (June 25)

- Revisions to the draft technical description for the July 5th submission
- PMP meeting with Beatrice Mweene, TTL COR
- Languages meeting at USAID to present the plan to work in Cinyanja and Citonga and then to use in Cibemba speaking areas materials developed in Cibemba by RTS

Tues (Jun 26)

- Happy Readers demonstration-am
- Meeting with Read to Succeed on materials development
- Meeting with CAMFED
- Development of a draft organigram
- Technology strategy meeting
- Revisions to draft realigned budget

Wed (Jun 27)

- Technology strategy meeting
- Meeting with Diane Gardsbane of ENCOMPASS
- Meeting with Room to Read representatives
- Revisions to draft technical description and draft work plan

Thurs (Jun 28)

- Meeting with Mrs. Sakala of CDC
- Out brief meeting with Beatrice Mweene, TTL COR
- Meeting with Irish Aid representatives
- Development of draft log frames with Diane Gardsbane of ENCOMPASS
- Departure from Lusaka

**APPENDIX 4: NAMES AND POSITIONS OF MESVTEE OFFICERS
CONSULTED DURING THE QUARTER**

1. Mrs. Cecilia Sakala, Director of Standards and Curriculum;
2. Mr. Jolly Chembe, Director of the Examination Council of Zambia;
3. Mr. Joe Kanyika, Assistant Director, Research and Test Development;
4. Ms. Teza Musakanya, Principal for Research and Test Development;
5. Mr. Shadreck Nkoya, Senior Research Officer;
6. Mr. Bupe Musonda, Senior Statistician
7. Mrs. Madrine Mbuta, Chief Planner of Directorate of Planning and Information
8. Provincial Education Officer of Central Province
9. DEBs for Chibombo, Chongwe, Kabwe, Lusaka, Mazabuka, and Monze Districts.
10. District Education Board Sectary –Chibombo
11. District Education Board Sectary –Choongwe
12. District Education Board Sectary –Kabwe
13. District Education Board Sectary –Lusaka
14. District Education Board Sectary –Mazabuka
15. District Education Board Sectary –Monze